

*Main Office
400 North Tampa Street, Suite 3200
Tampa, Florida 33602
813/274-6000
813/274-6358 (Fax)*



*Post Office Box 600
200 West Forsyth Street, Room 700
Jacksonville, Florida 32201
904/232-2682
904/232-2620 (Fax)*

*2110 First Street, Suite 3-137
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
941/461-2200
941/461-2219 (fax)*

U.S. Department of Justice
*United States Attorney
Middle District of Florida*

*80 North Hughey Avenue, Room 201
Orlando, Florida 32801
407/648-7500
407/648/7643 (Fax)*

Reply to: **Jacksonville, FL**

March 18, 2002

PEREZ SWORN IN AS U.S. ATTORNEY -- TAPS FIRST ASSISTANT

Paul I. Perez was sworn in as the United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida today in Tampa by Chief Judge Elizabeth A. Kovachevich. Mr. Perez had been confirmed by the United States Senate on March 8, 2001.

After he was sworn in, Mr. Perez announced that he had chosen James R. Klindt, a veteran Jacksonville prosecutor to serve as his First Assistant. The First Assistant U.S. Attorney is the U.S. Attorney's chief assistant.

Mr. Perez stated, "Jim Klindt is a hard-nosed prosecutor but has a reputation for being fair and highly ethical. His ties to the Middle District of Florida will enhance his effectiveness as my chief assistant."

Klindt, age 46, was raised in Orlando, and graduated from Edgewater High School in 1973. He attended the University of South Florida in Tampa, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1976. He returned to Orlando and taught in the public school system for five years. After teaching in Germany with the Department of Defense for two years, he attended the Florida State University College of Law, graduating in 1986.

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Klindt served as a law clerk to the Honorable Howell W. Melton, United States District Judge in Jacksonville for two years and joined the U.S. Attorney's Office in December 1988. For the past two years, he has been the Deputy Managing Assistant United States Attorney in Jacksonville. Over the years, Klindt has focused on prosecuting major drug and public corruption cases. Presently, he is the lead prosecutor in the investigation and prosecution of a number of Jacksonville Sheriff's Officers and others, who have been accused of robbery, drug dealing, and murder. According to Mr. Perez, he will recuse himself from the case because he represented one of the officers while in private practice. Klindt will oversee all aspects of the matter and will try the case, which is set for trial in Tampa on April 1, 2002.